

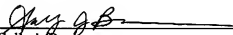
REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is submitted in response to the final Office Action dated August 9, 2006. In that Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 1-13, 32, and 42-47. The Examiner rejected claims 14 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). The Examiner also indicated that claims 15-23 and 25-31 contained allowable subject matter. However, the Examiner objected to these claims on grounds that the claims depended from a rejected base claim. Accordingly, the Examiner indicated that claims 15-23 and 25-31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In this paper, rejected claims 14 and 24 have been canceled. At the same time, claims 15-23 and 25-31 have been rewritten such that these claims no longer depend from a rejected base claim. Accordingly, all of the claims in the present application are either allowed or in a condition for immediate allowance.

Although this paper is submitted in response to a "final" rejection, Applicants believe that this paper should be entered because it places the application in a condition for immediate allowance. See MPEP § 714.12 (an amendment after final that "will place the application either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered."). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,


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